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Letter dated 21 March 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 21 March 2016, addressed to you by a representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Mehmet Dânâ (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 44, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Y. Halit Çevik
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 21 March 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I would like to draw your kind attention to a significant development on the island. A water supply project, which has been designed to supply water from Turkey to Northern Cyprus for the purposes of domestic consumption and irrigation through a subsea pipeline constructed in the Mediterranean Sea, was put into operation on 17 October 2015.

The project is the realization of a prolonged dream of bringing water from Turkey to the island, which has a semi-arid climate, with an average annual rainfall of 500mm and limited ground water reservoirs. This high technology project, which is the first of its kind in the world, constitutes the most significant achievement in the past century on the island.

Initially, the project is expected to provide 75 million m^3 of water to Northern Cyprus annually. Within the framework of the project, the water collected at the Alaköprü Dam, constructed on the Dragon River in Anamur, Turkey, will flow via the 107 km-long pipeline, of which 24 km is at ground level, 80 km is in the Mediterranean Sea, 250 meters below sea level, and 3 kilometres is at ground level, up to the Geçitköy Dam in Northern Cyprus.

The water will be used for domestic consumption as well as for agricultural purposes. It is evident that allocating more areas for irrigated farming will help improve the standard of living in Northern Cyprus.

The yearned-for project, which also aims to benefit the whole of Cyprus, is entitled the "peace water project" by the Turkish side, which demonstrates its goodwill as well as its determination for peace and trust in the region. Both the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot Governments have consistently expressed their desire to provide water for Southern Cyprus, which is also suffering from water scarcity. The water supply project, when operating at full capacity, will overcome the increasing need for water on the island in the long run. Nevertheless, the Greek Cypriot side has not responded positively to the repeated calls of the Turkish Cypriot side to cooperate and share the water provided by Turkey.

Recently, the Greek Cypriot Representative to the United Nations, in his politically motivated letter addressed to you regarding the water supply project, repeated the unfounded Greek Cypriot allegations that "Turkey invaded Cyprus in 1974 and aims the integration of occupied areas with Turkey". It should be duly noted that the intervention of Turkey in 1974 was inevitable in the wake of the coup d'état carried out by the junta regime in Greece with the help of Greek Cypriot collaborators in Cyprus, which sought to annex the island to Greece. In its resolution 573 (1974), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe condemned the coup d'état carried out in Cyprus and stated that the Turkish Government had exercised its right of intervention in accordance with article 4 of the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee. In a similar vein, none of the Security Council resolutions on Cyprus refer to the legitimate intervention of Turkey, which saved the lives of Turkish Cypriots, as an "invasion" or its subsequent presence on the island as an "occupation".

It should be underlined that the Republic of Cyprus was founded in 1960 in accordance with international treaties. The Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities, in their respective capacities as two political equals, entered into a partnership, setting up a joint State. The legitimacy of the 1960 Republic lay in the joint presence and effective participation of both communities in all organs of the State. Neither of the parties had the right to rule the other or assume the right to be the Government of the other or of the island as a whole in the absence of the other in all organs of the State and Government.

The partnership Republic of Cyprus collapsed after an onslaught upon the Turkish Cypriot partner in December 1963, and ever since, there has not been a joint central administration on the island capable of representing the whole of Cyprus, either legally or factually. Each side has since ruled itself, while the Greek Cypriot side continues to claim that it is the "Government of Cyprus".

As you are well aware, in separate and simultaneous referendums, which were held on 24 April 2004 in Northern and Southern Cyprus, the United Nations Comprehensive Settlement Plan was approved by 65 per cent of Turkish Cypriots, while 76 per cent of Greek Cypriots rejected it. The separate and simultaneous referendums confirmed the fact that there exist two equal sides on the island, neither of which represents the other.

Consequently, it would be untenable to claim that there is a single authority to represent the whole island, disregarding the reality that any solution in Cyprus requires the consent of both sides and both communities.

It is amply clear from the foregoing that the Greek Cypriot administration of Southern Cyprus has no legal or moral right to claim to represent or act on behalf of anyone other than the Greek Cypriot community. The "Government of the Republic of Cyprus" has no legal or moral right or jurisdiction to represent or act on behalf of the whole island or the Turkish Cypriot people, whose sole legitimate representatives are those elected under the Constitution of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The water project is based on the bilateral agreement made between the Government of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and the Government of the Republic of Turkey, and was also approved by the parliaments of both countries, and is thus fully legitimate.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our hope and expectation that the negotiating process that resumed on 15 May 2015 will conclude with a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus issue. The Turkish Cypriot side remains committed to continuing its constructive approach for a fair and lasting settlement of the Cyprus issue on the basis of the Joint Declaration of 11 February 2014 by the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot leaders and the established United Nations parameters, and we believe that through an intensified, results-oriented negotiation process, an agreement could be reached within months.

At a time when the two sides on the island of Cyprus are expected to avoid blame games or other negative public statements, the Greek Cypriot side should abandon contentious approaches and adopt more positive and constructive policies with a view to creating an environment conducive to the settlement of the Cyprus issue.

Both sides on the island could benefit from the water supply project, literally making it a peace water project. Establishing cooperation on this matter would pave the way for wider cooperation regarding other natural resources around the island and in the region as well. Cyprus is the common home of both Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities, and we strongly believe that building up a bright and prosperous common future depends on the ability of both sides to coexist on the island in peace.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 44, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mehmet **Dânâ**
Representative